RELATION OF COMMUNITY BUSINESS NEEDS TO HIGH SCHOOL COMMERCIAL PROGRAM







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RELATION OF COMMUNITY BUSINESS NEEDS TO HIGH SCHOOL COMMERCIAL PROGRAM

REX TOOTHMAN

Submitted in partial fulfillment

of the requirements for the degree

of Master of Arts

in the Graduate School of

Florida Southern College

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The writer would like to make acknowledgment to the following people for inspiration and assistance in the writing of this thesis:

- Dr. C. L. Murray, Florida Southern College
 - Dr. Thomas J. Wagner, Florida Southern College
 - Prof. Donald A. Thompson, Florida Southern College
 - Prof. Emily Hancock, Florida Southern College
 - Miss Edith Mayfield, Librarian, Bowling Green College of Commerce
 - Dr. J. L. Harman, Past President, Bowling Green College of Commerce
 - Mr. E. G. Whitney, Secretary, Lakeland Chamber of Commerce
 - Miss Patricia Boswell, Secretary, Lakeland Junior Chamber of Commerce
 - Dr. Carl S. Cox, Supervising Principal, Lakeland City Schools

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APPROVAL SHEET

The undersigned members of the reading committee of REX TOOTHMAN have examined his thesis, "Relation of Community Business Needs to High School Commercial Program," and recommend its acceptance:

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CHAPTER I

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THE PROBLEM

The purpose in this investigation is to show the relation of the business needs of the community to the high school commercial program.

Specific problems. The specific problems involved in this investigation are outlined as follows:

- 1. To point out the deficiencies in the curriculum of the high school commercial program now in existence in meeting the needs of the community.
- 2. To show the responsibility of the commercial teacher in helping to develop a commercial school program which will adequately meet the needs of the community.
- 3. To show the responsibility of the administrator in helping to develop a commercial school program that will adequately meet the needs of the community.
- 4. To prove that the local businessman has a definite responsibility in helping to develop the commercial

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school program to meet the community business needs.

- 5. To use the normative-survey method (interview procedure) to find out from commercial teachers, administrators, and businessmen in the City of Lakeland, Florida, what they consider to be the outstanding curriculum deficiencies, upon whose shoulders they place the responsibility for those deficiencies, what they suggest could be done to remedy those deficiencies, and what procedures they would suggest to better high school-businessmen relationships.
- 6. To point out what the cooperative efforts of all three groups might do in effecting a worth-while commercial program in the high school.
- 7. To suggest curriculum adjustments which might help the school in meeting community business needs.

<u>Definition of terms used</u>. The following terms will be used in the development of the thesis and are defined as follows:

1. High school commercial program: The course of study offered in the high school, ostensibly to those students who plan to enter into some occupational pursuit in the business world, and consisting as a general rule of some combination of typewriting, shorthand, business English, bookkeeping, salesmanship, consumer education,

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business arithmetic, and stenography.

- 2. The community: That particular section from which the students of a particular high school are gathered and into which they are dispatched to seek employment after their schooling is ended.
- 3. Diversified Cooperative Training (D. C. T.): A course of study used in Florida high schools in which students attend classes in the morning and hold down approved part-time jobs in the afternoon.

Delimitations. References to books and periodicals will be made only from those publications which have been published in the last decade. This problem is a current one, having come to attention of educators as an indirect result of World War II; subsequently, literature which is not current would be of lit le research value in solving this particular problem.

Much has been said and written of late on the intricate inter-relationships of business and education. The development of this problem will be confined, however, to the particular relationship of community business needs and the high school. Since the investigator is a high school teacher, no further explanation for this delimitation seems necessary.

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Basic hypotheses. This thesis will be developed on the basis of these three basic hypotheses:

- 1. The failure of the high school commercial program to meet adequately the business needs of the community is not the sole responsibility of either the commercial teacher, the administrator, or the businessman.
- 2. The development of a high school commercial program which does adequately meet the needs of the community is the joint responsibility of the commercial teacher, administrator, and businessman.
- 3. The success of the program depends upon the ability of the commercial teacher, administrator, and businessman to work cooperatively toward a common goal.

The need for the study. The time has come for greater cooperation between men in business and leaders in the field of education. To eliminate the present unsatisfactory conditions, it is necessary that anyone having anything to do with preparing young people for the business world and with employing them after graduation be willing to do his part. Business, industry, the school, and the community should all be concerned in organizing programs for the purpose of working in closer cooperation with each other. As this spirit of cooperation grows, each will understand more clearly the responsibilities of the other

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in developing programs which will increase the employing of the high school graduate in the business field. To help in bringing about this objective, this particular study was chosen.

Related literature. "The aim of education should be to assist each individual to do better the more desirable things that he is most likely to do anyway," wrote Briggs. To this aim most straight-thinking educators and citizens subscribe, if they believe that education should help each boy and girl to live more efficiently and happily now and for the remainder of his life.

business education, the high school should be concerned with preparing him for a job that the community might be able to offer him after he graduates from high school. On the other hand, if the desire of the student is to get a general business education, then the high school performs a slightly different function. This student must learn to understand, to appreciate, and to perform intelligently the basic business functions, irrespective of the particular occupation followed.

Vocational business education is concerned primarily with the preparation of students for jobs. Thus the objective of vocational business education is preparation

^{1.} Thomas H. Briggs, Improving Instruction, p. 17.

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for gainful employment in a particular occupation. business education is that area of business education which contributes to the general education of all learners. It should be open to all pupils and should deal strictly with the personal-social and consumer problems in our economic life. Paul Muse says that the two areas are related and that basic business education is essential background for vocational business education. However, for various administrative and pedagogical reasons, the two areas should not be mixed or fused.

The idea of making a study of business and industrial needs in various communities with a view to applying the findings to public school instruction is repidly coming into common usage. Much publicity has been focused on the "flying classroom" sponsored by Professor Horn at Michigan State College last summer. 2 Using a plane as their principal means of transportation, the Michigan principals and superintendents in Professor Horn's class rode their flying classroom to Chicago, Washington, Philadelphia, and New York. From more than 150 businessmen, the educators asked advice on how to

2. p. 85.

Paul F. Muse, "Principals and Curriculum Construction in Business Education," The American Business Education Yearbook, (1947), p. 50.
"How Business Can Help," Newsweek, (August 11, 1947),

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make their instruction more practical and reported back some very interesting findings. Of course all approaches to the problem of finding the needs of business cannot be made in such an ideal manner, but even so the results should prove equally interesting.

Procedure in treating data. An examination of the source materials on this subject reveals that much has been written by administrators, teachers, and businessmen concerning what needs to be done to set up a commercial school program which meets the needs of the community. In these articles and books the blame is placed on various and sundry groups—the teacher blames the administrator, the businessmen blames the teacher, the administrator blames the businessman, etc. In developing this thesis, the intent is to prove that the responsibility is three-fold and to show the extent to which each one of the three groups concerned is involved.

Chapters I-IV will be devoted to research from current books and magazines which is theoretical in nature. In Chapter V this research will be applied to analyzing the problems evolving from the community business needs of the City of Lakeland, Florida. Chapter VI will consist of the summary and conclusions.

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CHAP ER II

THE BUSINESS EDUCATION "FACHER'S RESPONSIBILITY

Much disagreement is evident among educators as to what the function of the teacher is in the wider class-room of American life. In this day, when the citizens of the world are proving themselves ineffectual in creating a unity of heart among the nations, more and more men of vision are turning to education as the sole hope and the only ultimate path toward enduring world peace. If this be truly the function of education, then we must once again examine the obligation of teachers to society, and particularly to that element of society in which education is functioning, the local community.

Introduction. Kaplan declares that when we examine the attempts to define the nature of the teacher's obligations, two diametrically opposed points of view appear:

l. Louis Kaplan, "New Horizons in Teacher-Community Relationships," Journal of Educational Sociology, (March 1948), p. 417.

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On the one hand there are those who think that a teacher's duty is solely to teach, that his function is that of perpetuating the institutions and social patterns that exist today. This concept holds that the proper sphere of activity of the teacher is his classroom, and the proper subjects of instruction are those aspects of the cultural heritage which have been proved and standardized. The traditional conception is that the teacher can best serve the community by preserving intact in each generation those values and behavior patterns held by the previous generations.

Another and more daring group of thinkers deplore this static conception of the teacher's function. This group demands that teachers break with the bonds of the past, that they back up the lines of their power and exert their influence by building in each community a strong and vital cell of a functional democracy.

Teachers who seek to effect no changes, who wish to do nothing more socially significant than to fill out the records neatly, to follow the prescribed course of study, and otherwise lead a safe and respectable life, are undoubtedly antagonizing no one. If this is truly the social function of a teacher in the schools of a democracy, then there need be no question of teacher-community relationships. All will remain secure and happy in their

isolation from reality. All, that is, except those who truly appreciate the social significance of teaching.

If teachers are to take the lead in promoting issues that education must foster, then they must understand that a community is not a unified political organization, nor even a definite geographical area. The community is, rather, a group of people with a common purpose—a living growing thing. The teacher cannot deal with a community of a single thought because no such thing exists. Therefore, Kaplan tells us, the teacher must be a partisan. He must align himself with a group because a community is an aggregate of groups, and he must give direction to the growth of this group.

As programs of curriculum reorganization multiply in serious attempts of school systems to improve their service to all American youth, teachers should feel a challenge to consider their part in the important movement. Considerable discussion and some disagreement have been evident among eminent educators about the responsibility of the teacher in the curriculum development.

Keily thinks² that some of the disagreement is due to a failure to distinguish clearly between the terms

^{1.} Ibid., p. 418.

^{2.} Helen J. Keily, "Responsibility of the Teacher,"

American Business Education Yearbook (1947), p. 87.

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"curriculum" and "course of study." The broad scope of curriculum development often involves many years of work and includes a thorough consideration of the educational needs and resources of a community. That any teacher should or could be omitted from participation in the broad concept of curriculum development as thus conceived would be absurd. On the other hand, it would also be absurd to suggest that every teacher in any system could have a personal part in the specialized and technical task of the actual writing of courses of study.

Revision of the business curriculum should be based upon results of community surveys and preliminary studies in which every competent business education teacher has had an op ortunity to take part. Keily is of the opinion that when new try-out courses are introduced, they should be taught, insofar as possible, by experienced teachers who are not opposed to change. Less experienced teachers should later, under helpful guidance, be given an opportunity also to do try-out work and evaluate the results of learning.

In any system, there may be teachers, experienced and inexperienced, young and old, who will have to be "sold" on the program by a demonstration of more direct

^{1.} Ibid., p. 90.

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methods or improved results. They may wish to be given more direct methods or improved results and wish to be given complete courses of study to follow. The re-education of such teachers is an important part of the entire program. One of the happiest outcomes may be changes in the attitude and philosophy of some of the participating personnel.

All evidence shows that if the schools are to meet the challenge of the world's need, then teachers must leave the safety of their classrooms and venture out into the community and into the strife and conflict of the marketplace where the nation's destiny is being cast and fashioned.

Business experience. The teacher should have a good understanding of the principles and practices of business gained from a study of business subjects and practical business experience.

Successful business experience is one of the most helpful qualifications of the business teacher. Business teachers who have this qualification can train students for positions which they themselves can satisfactorily fill. The instructional standards, instead of being based on a normal distributive curve or the average achievement of the class, are based on occupational em loyment standards insofar as such standards are known.

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Occupational business experience also gives the teacher that professional poise and satisfaction which comes from mastery, which inspires confidence of the student, and which provides a strong incentive for individual student achievement. Moreover, such experience enables the teacher to earn the respect and support of businessmen, teaching associates, and school administrators.

Business experience, as well as professional experience, should be kept current. The introduction of various makes of business machines and equipment, the increasing specialization of labor, and the applica ion of principles of scientific management are continually bringing forth better organization and performance of workers in business. Hence, subject matter and instructional standards based on business practices and requirements of ten years ago may now be obsolete. Likewise, results of educational research are making obsolescent certain teaching methods and techniques which ten years ago may have been considered modern.

Long comments that just any kind of experience is the same as no experience at all. Experience as a stenographer would be of little value to the teacher of book-keeping and accounting and vice versa. Experience as a

^{1.} Robert C. Long, "The Successful Business Teacher,"

Journal of Business Education, (January 1948), p. 23.

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clerical worker would be of small benefit to the teacher of shorthand. The reason is obvious, for the nature of the experience should have a direct bearing on the kind of training the teacher will put into classroom practice.

Being equipped with good intellectual, spiritual, and physical qualities is not all sufficient. A teacher who does not cultivate the habit of improving his equipment will soon drop from the ranks because of inefficiency. One's intellectual equipment will soon be out of date unless he keeps in touch with the changing educational procedure. In other words, the teacher must constantly grow professionally, particularly in the procedure in commercial education, which is constantly changing. A teacher of bookkeeping twenty years ago will be uninformed on many of the teaching principles of today unless he has constantly watched the trend and development of the subject. The business teacher has one of the greatest privileges of all teachers in the matter of professional growth. The field is greatly varied, and the opportunities are many for constant improvement in one's intellectual equipment. The business teacher who does not show improvement is shortly considered a "back number" in professional and business Comment of the Party of the Par procedure.

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Herrman emphasizes that training in business should not be static. It shifts with the changing requirements of the labor market and the requirements of business. Business teachers should realize this same element of interest in the classroom where there may be a tendency to follow an inflexible line over a long period of time. Education must keep abreast with developments.

Can a teacher who has no practical experience vitalize his teaching, inspire confidence in his students, and know what business expects from its office employees in terms of job performance, as well as the one who has had such experience? DeVinny avers2 that wage earning occupational experience is the first coordinating link and is definitely sound in theory. This experience makes it possible for the teacher to know first-hand the practices and procedures of business, to obtain more complete and more accurate occupational information, and to provide a background for book learning.

But what happens to the teacher who goes into an office and learns how things are actually done in business? Herrman says:

^{1.} J. M. Herrman, "Business Must Participate in Training,"

Journal of Business Education, (March 1947), p. 11.

2. Margaret C. DeVinny, Whe Connecting Link between the School and Business, Modern Business Education, (January 1946), p. 6.

^{3.} Herrman, op. cit., p. 11.

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"If he has not delayed too long in acquiring this first-hand acquaintance with business practices and standards, he returns to the fold full of ideas for making his teaching more practical. He meets little, if any, encouragement in many cases; in some cases, strong opposition. The ideas are fine, to be sure, but they won't fit in too easily with the established. Now and then a teacher has the patience and perserverance to try to use little scraps of what he has learned on the job. But that usually seems so inadequate and hopelassly slow a process that eventually the teacher goes back into business to stay, or abandons all hope of using this newly-acquired practical knowledge and becomes one more of the too large group of "routine" teachers and administrators."

However, most educators agree that businessmen of the community can make important contributions to business education by supporting the principle that those who train for occupational competence be occupationally competent themselves, and by providing opportunities for local periods of business employment. The salaries paid teachers during the periods of business employment should be considered a good investment, particularly in terms of the improved ability of the students they will train.

and succeeds knows that he himself can do what he expects his students to accomplish in the course of their training and what the student may be called upon to do. The school of tomorrow which takes two or three years to educate a stenographer or two to four years to develop a typist will be definitely rare. The business teacher will be required

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to work at rather frequent intervals in offices, or to use other means of keeping up with what the student needs to know. He must be more than a classroom teacher.

Cooperative training. The business teacher and the local community are drawing closer together every day, not only in content but in real office situations, through cooperative training. Cooperative training is an intellectual and satisfying phase of education. From the standpoint of the beginning worker, he receives in-training work experience coupled with purposeful remedial teaching. Weaknesses in business performance may be discovered and corrected before he leaves school permanently. He also gains self-confidence which the beginning worker so badly needs. Not only do the sudent and business teacher benefit from cooperative training, but the employer gains also because he gets a partly prepared and satisfied employee, thus cutting down the rate of turnover.

Half of each school day the student goes to school, just as other students do; and there, under the guidance of a qualified teacher, he obtains further knowledge and skill in his chosen occupation. The other half of each school day and often on Saturdays and holidays, the student applies his classroom training to actual work in a local establishment. Here he gains first-hand knowledge

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and experience in some of the normal activities and demands actually faced in a world which includes working for pay.

with such realities as social securi y, sales tax, irate customers, time schedules, competition, wage and hour laws, business risks, financial and credit instruments, some of the requirements for success and promotion in his particular work, and many other things seldom met in the classroom.

At the same time, he meets the requirements for graduation.

In the classroom the cooperative sudent receives specialized instruction in his chosen field—such as book-keeping, retailing, or stenography—and he receives "related" instruction appropriately selected from such subjects as arithmetic, penmanship, spelling, speech, business law, business ethics, advertising, art, business English, personality development, and selling one's services. For his practical experience, he works behind the counter, at the typewriter, in the bookkeeping department, at the calculator, in the stockroom, or at the front desk. For part of each day he does the kind of work he would do if he were "holding down" a full-time job.

Cooperative students are not exploited by the businessmen who employ them; they are paid for their part-time work at real rates comparable to those paid to

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other beginning workers employed on the same type job.

Briefly, the cooperative part-time type of business training takes a student of employable age, who has completed at least three years of high school work, and makes of him a trained worker-one who not only "knows his books," but can readily finite one of the several business occupations.

Humphrey declares that cooperative part-time training exerts a humanizing influence on young people at a time when it is needed most. Somehow many have assumed that education is one thing and life another, that one begins where the other stops; but cooperative education is a standing proof that work and education can go side by side. No amount of education given before entry into business, however long it may be continued, can compare in value with education given concurrently with business life.

The cooperative training program offers a golden opportunity for the business teacher to serve as a connecting link between the school and the community. Conoperative training means the school and community working together for development of the child. As representatives of the two groups, the teacher and businessman have a great responsibility in the development of our citizens of the future.

^{1.} Clyde W. Humphrey, "Community Relationships in Business Education," <u>Journal of Business Education</u>, (February 1947), p. 13.

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The community survey. Teachers of business subjects should not rely solely upon the administration to furnish them with necessary instruction materials and practices. The business community of the school contains a wealth of teaching materials. Some of these materials can be obtained by a survey of the business community. Such a survey should seek:

- l. To find, within certain classifications, what business occupations are represented in the town, as a basis for cooperation and planning between school and business.
 - 2. To obtain reliable information on occupations.
- 3. To find the amount and kind of school training and the occupational experience which workers in certain business occupations have had.
- 4. To find, for improving and upgrading, the deficiencies of former high school pupils now employed in
 local business, and to determine the job success of pupils
 as an evaluation device.

Much of this material cannot be obtained except by actual observation, investigation, and study of the business life of the community. The starting point for such a study is a wide acquaintance with the businessmen and their businesses. The teacher who realizes the possibilities of such relationships has an opportunity to know

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his pupils, their business background, and their present business environment. He has an opportunity to know the reactions of the community to new ideas and to provide such preliminary preparation for improvement as can be given to pupils in high school.

men of the community can aid the teacher in conducting surveys of the business community, in planning the curriculum and courses of study, in placing the sudents, and in promoting business li eracy on he part of the pupils and teachers. The advisory commutee should be a functioning unit; and wherever it is fearible and practical, the committee's recommendations should be put into effect. As a matter of practice, the advisory committee itself can be made to function only if school people maintain effective personnel relations with the members.

Should strive to become a member of the business community in which he serves. A member of the community participates in the chamber of commerce, in the civic clubs, in fraternal organizations, in recreational groups, and in activities connected with booster trips, sales, drives, etc. The teacher as a member of the civic clubs and the chamber of commerce should develop valuable contacts as

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well as business literacy. Membership in various trade groups such as the Retail Merchants Association and the National Office Managers Association is of great value.

That no one person can know all about his work is a well-known fact. He must learn each day in order to progress. Thus, for the experienced, as well as the inexperienced, important knowledge of the actual operation of business, its organization and its different functions, can be gained through active participation in business groups. In addition, the teacher can do much toward improving good will in a community if he takes an active part in the work of the church. The well-rounded teacher shares in the social activities to give needed relaxation and to give the business community a chance to know him. The community must know the teacher and like him before he can succeed in the school system.

However, the teacher should not limit his search for extra work to the businesses of the community. The civic clubs, social clubs, and many others will have numerous jobs that the high school publis may assist in doing as a part of their assigned school work. The community jobs should be selected with care, and the business department of the high school should not become the dumping ground for monotonous tasks. The jobs the teacher accepts should have educational and vocational value to the pupils.

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Too, the teacher himself has many skills that can be used by the businessmen of the community. He has been trained in accounting and bookkeeping, in filing, in the use of different machines, in retailing, and in many other knowledges and skills. His use of these by part-time work or summer employment provides him with many valuable contacts.

If the teacher will make the best of his relationships with business, he can secure many different instructional aids which are, for various reasons, impossible
for the school to supply. The community that is convinced
of the need for cooperating through the business education
teacher will sup ly demonstrations of office machines and
devices, literature on business, and many other useful
classroom materials.

Job placement. Proper placement is equally as important as determining the applicant's acceptability for a job, if not a more important element. DeVinny believes that office workers are individual personalities and do not conform to a standard mold. Fach has his or her own aptitudes, interests, capabilities, and ambitions. Experience has shown that satisfactory results in job

^{1.} Margaret C. DeVinny, "The Connecting Link between the School and Business," Modern Business Education, (January 1946), p. 6.

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performance and job satisfaction are obtained only when the individual is assigned to work that makes full use of these qualifications.

Proper placement calls for a keen judgment of human nature, the use of considerable tact, and a knowledge of the student's capabilities to handle the job from a stand-point of mechanical performance. It also requires a thorough familiarity with the details of the job. Where could a business teacher obtain this knowledge of the details and the marketability of his students better than through discussions with office managers, and through observation trips at the plant or office?

teacher can realize more fully what the office executive expects in terms of job performance, the type of work done, the number and variety of machines used, the number of employees, the starting salary, the opportulity for advancement, and the method of employee induction. He can learn his market much better than if he had remained in the classroom. He has an overview of the concern so that when an employer asks for a worker in his office, the business teacher knows the type of work to be done and can recommend students for the job much better than he could through telephone conversation.

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Summary and conclusions. Pendery sums up some of the ways in which teachers can help sudents to prepare the way for entrance into community business life as follows:

- 1. Business teachers should know their subject matter so that students can converse with the teachers as they would with a businessman.
- 2. The business teachers should be a source of information and help for those in the community.
- 3. The business teacher should know what is expected of students in their initial job.
- 4. The business teachers should be acquainted with business practices in testing employees before and during employment.
- 5. The business teacher should lose no time in getting classes organized and started.
- 6. Office visitations by business teachers will keep them informed on current developments in the business office.
- 7. A study of office manuals will acquaint the business teacher with modern practices.
- 8. A study of job instruction and job classification in business offices will do much to help teachers
 know what businesses expect of their employees.
 - 9. Membership in business associations, such as

^{1.} John A. Pendery, "Does Your Teaching Measure Up to the Businessman's Yardstick?" Modern Business Education, (March 1947), p. 10.

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the National Office Management Association will be very helpful to the business teacher.

Business education should be one of the liveliest and most stimulating subjects in the school curriculum. Too often it is taught in such a "cut and dried" manner that the student soon becomes bored and loses all interest. Mertz asserts that too often commercial teachers sit behind the protection of job tenure and teach a program that they hope fits people for business. The matter of the student's earning a living successfully worries them not at all. As with many other professions, when teachers do attend conventions or prepare programs for conventions, they congregate under the guise of a specialized interest and listen to other commercial teachers. If business were as vital to them as teaching, they would at least wish to spend some of the time in making or renewing the acquaintance of business environment.

It is of the utmost importance that a close relationship be established between the schools and the community. After a pupil has completed his school 'raining, it is difficult, if not impossible, to correct errors of training. Michel says² that the community can serve

Paul A. Mertz, "With Business," American Business
 Education Yearbook (1941), p. 115.
 F. W. Michel, "Responsibility of the Businessman,"

^{2.} F. W. Michel, "Responsibility of the Businessman,"
The American Business Education Yearbook, (1947)
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as the school's greatest research laboratory. More teachers should have a better working knowledge of the requirements of the community. Businessmen should provide opportunities for teachers to acquire first-hand information about business.

Business education, a cooperative enterprise, must be recognized by the school and community as a joint responsibility. The effectiveness of any program of business training is directly dependent upon the extent to which the community and schools cooperate in determining the needs for business training and plan a program to meet those needs. The business education teacher, the connecting link between school and community, has indeed a grave responsibility.

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CHAPTER III

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THE ADMINISTRATOR'S RESPONSIBILITY

Maintaining and improving relationships between community and schools is a major responsibility of the administrator of business education. In this chapter, community cooperation from the point of view of the state, city, and local school administrator is discussed.

Introduction. The instances are few in which the school administrator is a specialis. In the field of vocational education in general or in the special field of business education. Jones believes that when any problem in this field arises, the school administrator should act as the executive in business acts when he has litigation. The executive calls in his lawyer who is a specialist in litigation. Likewise, the general school administrator should learn early in his career when a problem arises in business education, he should call in some member of his staff who is a specialist in this field or an authority. The school administrator who makes an attempt to solve

^{1.} Evan E. Jones, "Leadership Problems of the General School Administrator in Relation to Business Education," Balance Sheet, (January 1047), p. 212.

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problems in a specialized field sometimes finds himself in difficulty, unless he avails himself of the personnel at hand.

The administrator's knowledge of the community and of all phases of business education is the foundation of a good community relations program. The role of the administrator in business education is a very real role—provided that it is supported with a knowledge of the community and of facts pertinent to the functions, aims, purposes, and accomplishments of business education. If the administrator is properly and adequately informed, he will plan so that business education is not the starved and underfed stepchild of the high school program. This situation is often found in situations where the administrator's primary interest is centered in the academic or the technical field. To deny business education its just emphasis is to admit ignorance of its importance.

The American Business Education Association Year-book for 1944 outlined the responsibilities of the administrator in maintaining good community relations as follows: (1) discovering the needs of business, (2) meeting those needs through the school training program, (3) helping the community meet employment needs and

^{1.} Jessie Graham, et. al., "The Role of the Administrator of Business Education," American Business Education Yearbook, (1944), pp. 189-190.

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making satisfactory placements, (4) participating in the work of community groups, (5) seeking advice from business leaders, (6) publicizing the offerings of the schools, (7) using care in the selection of supplies and equipment, (8) making curriculum changes as needed, and (9) providing supervision of the teaching program. These same points are seemingly in effect in this year 1948 and will be explained and discussed in detail in this chapter.

Discovering the needs of business. Every aspect of the school's problems in setting up a curriculum should take into account those community forces which influence pupil growth. Orth emphasizes that thorough familiarity on the part of the school staff with the resources, limitations, and problems of the community can provide a base upon which a vital program of education may be built. The administrator, as the school's educational leader, should consider the job of community analysis as one of his larger responsibilities.

The administrator is responsible for interpreting his community's desires, his community's ambitions, and his community's ideals into a program of action through which they may be realized. People have tremendous faith

^{1.} H. M. Orth, "Beginning Principal Looks at the Community," American School Board Journal, (August 1947), pp. 12-13.

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in education. That faith must find realization in what the school does in making each community a better place in which to live. Cocking tells us that it is altogether likely that each community should want to be the best in the world. Leadership has one of its greatest roles in helping people to transform the concept of the "best community" into a reality. This means a dynamic program of action for the entire community.

Does the employer need more information from the school regarding business education graduates than the mere facts of high school graduation and area of specialization? Does he need data relative to the personality of the pupil? His successes and failures? His work habits? For example, can the National Clerical Ability mests, in the areas to which they apply, effectively aid in the solution of this problem? Are the administrative costs of these tests too high to make the giving of such information practicable?

The administrator can secure the best answers to these questions by using all the resources of the community that might contribute to the solution: teachers, business, industry, and even the students. One of the best sources of help is the education committee of the

^{1.} W. D. Cocking, "School Administrator as a Community Leader," School Executive, (June 1947), p. 5.

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National Office Management Association. There are evidences increasing in number as the years roll by that business, because of its concern, is becoming more and more cooperative with departments of business education in the development of the curriculum.

Business education should furnish the community with dependable data concerning business education graduates by setting up standards of achievement, tests, and records. Similarly, the community should furnish the schools with specific information concerning employment requirements and successes and failures of employees trained by the schools.

Meeting community needs through training programs. The careful observer realizes that adequately trained personnel in the business offices is just as imperative as machinists, engineers, and chemists. We know that the training of some workers can be completed within a few weeks in the factory. Stenographers, typists, and some office machine operators, however, can be trained in our schools only after months and sometimes years of careful preparation.

If the business department is to remain true to its name, it should train students for business and for jobs in offices and stores. It should give to the community workers who not only are loyal to the employer but who are

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also aware and responsive to the needs and rights of their own group.

The operation of the schools is undoubtedly the largest and most important business in the world. Foday's pupils are tomorrow's leaders of industry, education, and science. They are also tomorrow's failures. The training received in school is a powerful factor in determining into which category they will fall. Educators and businessmen must realize that mistakes made in training cannot be easily erased. After a pupil has completed his school training, it is difficult, if not impossible, to correct errors of training. It is therefore of the utmost importance that the administrator realize and accept his responsibility in developing a school program that will adequately meet the needs of the individual as well as the needs of the community. No better public relations can be maintained by the schools than by supplying the community with well-trained employees.

Functional education for business benefits the individual who receives it, the business that employs him, and
the community of which both the individual and the business
are a part. The purposes of business education are the
purposes of people in almost every walk of life; its
achievements are their achievements; and its shortcomings
are theirs to deplore or remedy.

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Satisfactory job placements. Community cooperation is improved when the school administrator arranges for the schools to help meet community employment needs. Many employers know that the efficiency of their workers will be multiplied if their skills can be improved while still in school. However, businessmen should be expected to give the degree of specialization necessary for competence after the new employee is on the job.

whether or not a cooperative part-time business education program (one in which part of the time is spent in school and part of the time is spent on the job) is desirable. The administrator must determine whether this program will gain the objectives set for the business education course and if it is a good way to give a student a well-organized education. If he adopts the plan, the administrator must investigate the conditions under which cooperative training is to take place. Jones warns that the administrator must be certain that there is no opportunity for exploitation of students, and that the program is really an educative process and remains educative during the entire period of training.

Evan E. Jones, "Leadership Problems of the General School Administrator," <u>Balance Sheet</u>, (January 1947), p. 212.

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larger responsibility of seeins to it that the placement activity becomes a definite and essential part of the program. The Ninth Yearbook of the National Business Teachers Association says that in the larger schools the function may be delegated to a staff member, the head of the business department, or through the head of a department to a part-time teacher or coordinator. In the smaller schools all function of the placement responsibility may be lodged with an assistant administrator, the head of the business department, or a classroom teacher who shows adaptability for and interest in the work.

Still, in first and last analysis, the fact remains that prime responsibility for placement lies with the chief administrator.

If an elaborate placement department is maintained, the head administrator must secure adequate funds for its successful operation and employ the needed personnel to make the department function. If only one teacher is to act in the entire capacity as suidance and placement director, it is still the responsibility of the administrator to define the scope, make the assignment, provide

^{1.} National Business Teachers Association Ninth Yearbook, "Effective Business Education," (1943), pp. 61-64.

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the time, and in some instances lend personal assistance to that teacher in the conduct of the work.

Regardless of the size of the high school in which he serves, the administrator still has a grave responsibility for counseling and guiding young people in their selection of positions and places in the community. Much of that counseling and guidance, if intelligently given, might help in the selection made and also serve to soften the blow when later changes create the necessity for occupational adjustments.

Participating in community groups. We have heard much in the past few years about community-school relations. Out of the welter of words and phrases, it seems that there is general agreement on the proposal that a good school system serves the needs of all the people of the community. Cocking brings up the point that it seems to be the practice that a good school constantly examines the community of which it is a part, and then out of its findings strives to improve the community.

If every school is to serve its community, then it follows that the administrator of the school must be a community leader. Certainly he must be far more than a

^{1.} W. D. Cocking, "School Administrator as a Community Leader," School Executive, (June 1947), p. 5.

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leader solely concerned with the routine operations of the traditional school. In other words, the concept of the school as having an all-round community responsibility carries with it the corollary that the administrator of such a school must also be a community leader.

Membership in the local chamber of commerce, personnel clubs, service clubs, and others, is an aid to the administrator who wishes to preserve and improve good public relations for the schools. This phase of the administrator's activity should not be one-sided; it should constitute real cooperation. Businessmen and other members of the community should be invited to speak before school groups and to help in other ways. In addition, the school people should work for community interests other than the school program. A community business education committee can render valuable service in establishing and maintaining community action favorable to business education.

contact should be established and continued with members of this association. Similar relations should be established with the retail merchants association. In practically all cities of any size there are placement services, both private and public. Administrators should maintain contacts with these services in order to keep in touch with trends of employment, the demand for workers, and the

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degree of success achieved by former students who have been placed by these agencies.

Making and maintaining such contacts does require a certain amount of time and effort. But the alert administrator who is sufficiently interested in the work he is doing will be forced to make these contacts and to use them for the betterment of the community. Live administrators cannot get along without these contacts. Such administrators will find ways of establishing them and, once established, will make the most of them.

Seeking advice from community leaders. The Eighth Yearbook of the National Business Teachers Association gives as one of the principles of business education the following:

"Business education can be organized and administered most effectively with the advice and support
of employers and advisory committees—local, state,
and national. The community from which advisory groups
are drawn should be within the economic area from which
students come and into which graduates go, and should
not necessarily be limited to the political subdivision in which the training happens to be given."

One of the very best sources of good community relationships is the advisory committee. Advisory committees may be set up for each of the business education

^{1.} National Business "eachers Association Eighth Yearbook, "The Principles of Business Education," (1942), p. 60.

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fields--distributive education, stenography, bookkeeping, general clerical, and consumer education. It is wise to invite representatives of groups, rather than individuals, to join these commit ees, as there should be no opportunity for a feeling of resentment on the part of persons not selected for the committees.

Under the Smith-Hughes Act, and all subsequent acts, the states were required to organize an advisory committee representing homemaking, agriculture, labor and commerce, and industry as a condition precedent to the receipt of federal aid. Reflecting this point of view, practically all local school authorities, acting under the inspiration of federal and state acts, appointed local committees to cooperate in the development of occupational training programs. Unfortunately, however, since no federal grants, other than for research and service, were available in the field of business education, too often no attempt has been made to include representatives of business in the advisory committees.

Since advisory committees on business education have been appointed only here and there, it becomes the responsibility of the administrator to help in the furtherance of this program in his school. It is doubtful if any attempt should be made to give occupational business training on anything like a comprehensive basis without the cooperation

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of employers. Their needs should be thoroughly understood, and they should be taken into account in the planning of courses and other activities incident to the preparation of workers for business positions.

Publicizing the school. Businessmen, political leaders, religious leaders, and other people who have things to sell or services to render, know that they must not only have an excelient product to sell, but that they must also educate the public about it and convince the public that the product is excellent. They all believe strongly in publicity and public relations. They spend millions of dollars a year in advertising and publicity to establish in the minds of the people convictions that will promote the buying of their products or the support of their groups. Business education teaches advertising, but it doesn't advertise. Isn't it queer?

In education, as in any other activity, public support is essential. The public wants its sons and daughters to have the finest possible education; and if it feels that they are getting it, the public will support and even fight for such an educational program. The business department needs the intelligent, sympathetic support of the public. With it, the business department can secure any justifiable objectives; without it, progress will be much more difficult.

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News stories, window displays, demonstrations, paid advertisements, radio programs, open-house days, and other plans may be used for publicizing to the community the work of the schools. The "you" attitude should prevail in this publicity just as in any sales campaign. The emphasis should be upon the services rendered by the school to the students, the employers, and the community.

all the work himself. There are, in every community, many assistants who will help carry the load if the administrator will but plan the campaign and see that the plans are carried out. First, there are the business teachers. If they are as well sold on the need for publicity as he is, the work can be divided. Secondly, there are the students and their organizations. If each commercial organization has a publicity committee, its members can do most of the "leg work" and can even make many useful suggestions. Then there are the local newspaper reporters who can be very helpful if they always get a friendly and helpful reception and if they find that the administrator has come ideas they can use.

There is a lot of help available if the administrator will but organize it. With all this assistance, the work of the administrator is lessened considerably so that he can devote his time to planning and to checking up. This couldn't require too much time. Administrators

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 who are conscientious, ambitious, and worthy of their calling will assume responsibility for securing intelligent, friendly, and sympathetic support from the community.

Selection of supplies and equipment. The administrator must be familiar with the supplies and equipment available. His familiarity with the latest types of supplies engenders respect among community members.

Collins is of the opinion that business education classrooms should strive to create an atmosphere of realism—to give pupils an experimental background—to teach them how things are done and why. This realistic practice is of inestinable value to high school pupils because so many of them have but a vague idea of how a business office operated or how they fit into the scheme of things. They have acquired knowledge and certain skills; yet they do not a preciate how much the efficient handling of business situations is dependent upon the proficiency of each worker and the coordinated efforts of all the employees.

The specialist in any field must know and be able to advise on equipment. Too often purchases of equipment are made without recourse to the advice of those who know and

^{1.} May W. Collins, "Equipment for the Business Department,"

American Business Education Yearbook, (1948), pp. 183-184.

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understand the need and use of special equipment. It is just as easy to secure the right kind of equipment as that which is less efficient. This takes courageous conviction at times, but it is well worth the effort. Such things as typewriter table height and the use of a particular machine in a given locality are illustrative items. There are many such considerations that appear of small importance by themselves, but assume large proportions in terms of continuing annoyance over a period of years. Foresight is always better than regret, and careful planning of equipment and supplies should take place.

New changes in curriculum. Jones explains that one of the first problems that comes to an administrator is that of determ ning the kind of business curriculum to offer in the schools. Even though courses in business education have been offered for years, it is necessary from time to time to check on the soundness of the program. The administrator will therefore give his attention to the evaluation of the current offerings; he will make some effort to determine how to meet student and community needs. His final judgment will, of course, be dependent upon many factors: the kind of teachers, students, equipment, and other

^{1.} Evan E. Jones, "Leadership Problems of the General School Administrator," Balance Sheet, (January 1947), p. 214.

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facilities for such training, as well as the kind and number of jobs that are available in the area served by the school. The question will also arise as to whether or not business education should be offered as general business, vocational, cooperative part-time training, or as an adult extension plan. Some communities may offer all plans, or only one or two of them.

As a specialist in his field, the administrator should guide the general development of business education. He must help determine the trend that the curriculum shall take. This will lead him into making necessary community contacts personally as well as through the medium of correspondence. The community environment will have a decided effect on the trend which the curriculum will take, and the administrative officer who is not cognizant of this fact is doomed to educational failure.

Making desirable changes in business curricula is not an easy task. A program of study which reflects the opinion of a single school administrator, members of the board of education, or a small committee of teachers is likely to become so firmly entrenched through use that suggestions and even strong recommendations frequently fail to bring out necessary revision.

Tradition in education, as in business and government, exerts a tremendous force. To counteract it, change

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should not be recommended merely for the sake of change.

Suggested improvements should be based on authoritative and carefully prepared data which readily substantiate the recommendations.

To be effective, recommendations should be based upon detailed studies of the school, the community, and local and nearby business conditions. They should be prepared by a person who has established a favorable reputation among school administrators as a thoroughly practical school executive. To obtain necessary information, surveys of local business conditions and employment opportunities frequently are helpful. They function best, however, if they are conducted by high school pupils and teachers, and if the resulting suggestions are strongly recommended by a committee of prominent and successful businessmen.

Providing supervision. Every large city school system and every state department of public instruction should employ at least one well-prepared successful business teacher as a supervisor of business education, according to leading American business educators. His major responsibility should be the improvement of all phases of business education. His problem is to work in harmony with school

^{1.} Jessie Graham, et al., "The Role of the Administrator of Business Education," American Business Education Yearbook, (1944), pp. 189-190.

officers in varying school situations in an effort to coordinate the business education program with the actual needs of pupils and of the civic and business communities.

Carefully planned supervisory programs, including surveys, visits to schools and classrooms, constructive discussions with teachers and school officers, conferences with members of the local business education advisory board, and visits to places of employment provide suitable material on which suggestions may be based.

clinics enable teachers to observe instruction in a few carefully selected classes. Followed by well-planned discussion periods, this method seems to accomplish a great deal in raising the morale of teachers who are required to solve their own problems. The supervisor works toward the improvement and maintenance of classroom standards by means of constructive supervisory devices. He attempts to relate the program effectively to local business practices and methods and to opportunities for post-high-school employment.

The supervisor's office should be more than a statistical depository. It should exert a strong influence for improvement upon business education practices in schools of all types and sizes. While the state supervisory staff

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can accomplish much in establishing teacher certification requirements, it should be recognized that well-prepared instructors do not in themselves assure satisfactory business education and instruction.

Summary and conclusions. A major responsibility of the administrator of business education, whether a state, city, or local school administrator, is the development of good relationships with his complex community. The many relationships involved require real leadership on the part of the administrator.

The competent administrator will discover early in his career that while occasionally there may be instructional difficulties in business education classrooms, most of the difficulties can be traced to faulty administration by school officers who do not understand clearly the purposes and problems of business education. Tonne says that it would be foolish for business teachers to revise their programs merely in terms of what school administrators say, because the administrator frequently does not see the minutiae of teaching problems. He picks up half-baked comments from businessmen and builds them up into oversimple generalizations. Nevertheless, the administrators

^{1.} Herbert A. Tonne, "What Administrators Think about Typing and Shorthand," <u>Journal of Business Education</u>, (December 1947), pp. 19-20.

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are the ones who go to the budget director for the funds needed to maintain business education. They have a broader perspective simply because their position gives them a larger point of view.

As an educator with responsibility for providing intelligent leadership, the administrator should be aware of the potentialities, limitations, and problems which the particular community presents to its pupils and teachers. The policy which the administrator follows in establishing community relationships depends in large measure upon these community factors. Orth thinks that an informed teaching staff, conscious of the community, should provide a sound base upon which to select an educational program geared to meet the real needs of the community. The initiation and development of a social interpretation program in the school would thus project the school into the life of the community and the community into the life of the school.

Unlike many of the academic subjects wherein the content has become comparatively well standardized, the needed activities in the department of business education are not only recent but in a state of constant change.

This is necessarily so because business itself is dynamic.

Therefore the business education offerings must be

^{1.} H. M. Orth, "Beginning Principal Looks at the Community," American School Board Journal, (August 1947), pp. 19-20.

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continually improved and adapted to new conditions. This is a task for one who is not only a conscientious student of business education but who is also alert to business education in its relation to all aspects of community life. Upon state and local administrators rests the responsibility of selecting someone to provide constructive planning, enthusiastic leadership, and solid foundations.

The larger concept of business education makes it imperative that school administrators revise their views of the objectives and duties of departments of business education. Progressive administrators will see at once the importance of vital business education-community relationships as the most effective adjunct in building school support. When school administrators recognize the value of correct leadership, and provide for it, they will find their schools expanding to meet the business needs of their community. The school will grow in favor with the business leadership of the city and effectively satisfy the basic functions of business education.

The factful administrator will seek to improve business education by skillfully correcting the faulty points of view of school officers. He must be equally skillful in advising boards of education and taxpayer organizations concerning the characteristics of a broad and strong business education program—one which will

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adequately satisfy the needs of the community and particularly the employers of office and store workers.

Cocking's contention seems sound when he says:1

"The accomplishments of the school adm nistrator are determined in the main by the energy, the vision, and the ability which he brings to his task. When every school administrator views his job as an opportunity to build a better community, then we shall have improved schools. What is far more important, we shall have improved communities."

^{1.} W. D. Cocking, "School Administrator as a Community Leader," School Executive, (June 1947), p. 5.

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CHAPTER IV

THE BUSINFSSMAN'S RESPONSIBILITY

in the responsibility of trying to develop the high school commercial program. However, a great deal of the responsibility for assisting the high school graduate to success and fully assuming his position in the business world rests in the hands of the businessman himself. If he were confronted with a statement to this effect, the average businessman would probably raise his hands in a gesture of helplessness and bemoan, "But what can I do?" Upon careful analysis of the problem, we find that there are a great many things he can do.

Introduction. There are certain basic steps in the process of conversion of graduates into employees, and the responsibilities for many of these rest within business itself. Everything is not wrong with the educational institutions. It is an encouraging sign to find many business groups getting together with the educators in different

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cities for the purpose of establishing some common ground which will result in a more productive and efficient job for each side. It is encouraging to a group of this type to know that there is considerably activity in this connection at the present time. Educators are getting together in Chicago, Rochester, San Diego, Cincinnati, and many other cities.

Industrialists belonging to the American Management Association say, according to the organization's Edpress

News Letter, that "While schools have changed little in their business education methods, the modern business office is changing and setting up new requirements year by year. Businessmen claim commercial education teachers need a new picture of how a modern office functions. Therefore the AMA called upon its members to develop more contacts with the schools and to help teachers produce more 'high-quality' office workers."

The AMA is doing something worth while in encouraging businessmen to make more contects with the school. In so doing, it is following the lead of other associations of businessmen who have found this practice helpful. The schools have improved a great deal. There is far more room for improvement, but the next steps in genuine improvement must be taken by businessmen themselves rather than by teachers. Improvement of office training is a

 cooperative venture which means that businessmen must participate in the improvement and not merely condemn the teachers.

Most important of all, according to Tonne, the businessman should look into the nature of the current philosophy of education, which is one of having students determine what they are going to do, when they are going to do it, and the way in which it is to be accomplished. Do businessmen want this kind of teaching? If they do, Tonne declares that they must expect the results—shoddy penmanship, inaccuracy in arithmetic skills, inability to read, and even worse, conceit about trivial accomplishments which are far below those which adult life really demands. If the businessman wants real ability in reading, writing, arithmetic, and related skills, then he must go to his board of education and demand that organized goals be established and real teaching be done.

Salaries for teachers and office workers. Business must pay decent salaries. In thousands of communities, Tonne claims that graduates trained by able commercial teachers are still receiving only \$20-25 per week.

^{1.} H. A. Tonne, "Better Training Wanted," Journal of Business Education, (September 1947), p. 7.

^{2.} Loc. cit.
3. Loc. cit.

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In terms of 1938 salaries, this is an extravagantly high wage. In terms of the 1948 situation, it is pitifully low. Such tactics on the part of businessmen will inevitably make the day of office unionization arrive more quickly. Possibly this is all to the good; but until the businessman starts paying a wage comparable to that paid by factories and other agencies, he cannot expect to attract the best-qualified girls to his office.

Business must also admit and meet its own competition. Commercial teachers are still getting salaries, in some cases, considerably below those which they could make as first-line office supervisors. In many communities, there are nome secretarial workers receiving more than business teachers. Hundreds of teachers have been lured from the schools by the higher salaries being paid by some business firms. Businessmen expect the schools to do a good job, but they are not willing to pay teachers as much as they pay their secretaries. If businessmen believe in the competitive determination of wages and want good teachers, they should follow through their own preachings. Good teaching will stem from good salaries.

Job standards. Businessmen must set up honest job standards. Talk about giving dictation at 125 words per

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minute and establishment of standards based upon such rumors are not sufficient bases for training stenographers. Before businessmen ask the schools to set up higher standards, they should honestly and realistically determine what their standards actually are.

Businessman as an active participant. McKenzie thinks that businessmen should allow the older secondary business school students to visit their offices and observe technical office jobs in actual operation. This should be supplemented with discussions and review of actual business forms. Functional department heads of a business should discuss informally with groups of students the problems met in daily business operations and the action taken toward their solution.

Businessmen should be available for talks before classes in business education on the secondary school level. This would afford ample opportunity for emphasis on the business training required, the need for a real grounding in the three R's, and the importance of excellent personality traits. During these talks, opportunities for advancement based upon the assumption of responsibility could be adequately stressed.

^{1.} Carl H. McKenzie, "Cooperation between Business and Education," Journal of Business Education, (June 1946), p. 11.

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McKenzie is also of the opinion that businessmen should arrange for the employment of business teachers during the summer months, if for no other reason than the opportunities which the matter offers for a discussion of mutual problems. The training of the teacher in new methods and procedures should, of course, be of advantage to his teaching. Opportunity is afforded for mutual suggestions leading to improvement in the internal routines and procedures, as proximity sometimes obscures the vision of the businessmen to shortcomings within his immediate surroundings.

According to Herrman, many educators say that business is doing less that its share of the teaching job. For example, one need only view some of the training programs in business to become aware of the shortcomings that prevail in this direction. In many companies the only training that is done is to show the new employee where to hang his coat and hat. In others, training programs consist of directing the employee to a desk and telling him to "sort these cards in alphabetical order."

While there are many exceptions to these conditions, we

Ibid., p. 12.
 J. M. Herrman, "Business Must Participate in Training," Journal of Business Education, (March 1947), p. 12.

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still find that the majority of companies have nothing in the way of a well-designed program for the new employee's integration into the organization.

Business-teacher cooperation. Michel suggests that the businessman might be instrumental in organizing a business-teacher association. Parent-teacher organizations have made a noteworthy contribution in improving the teacher-pupil relationships. The businessmen of every community should be interested in business-teacher organizations which bring the teachers in contact with businessmen and so enable both to better understand mutual problems.

Such an organization could successfully conduct periodical community surveys to determine what curriculum program revisions are necessary to meet changing conditions. Communities change, new industries are formed, and educational requirements may be affected as these changes take place. The needs of the area and the opportunities offered should have an important effect on the curriculum program.

Businessmen could, suggests Michel, furnish the teachers with job analyses. The use of the job breakdown

^{1.} F. W. Michel, "Responsibility of the Businessman,"

American Business Education Yearbook, (1947),
pp. 115-116.

^{2.} Ibid., p. 116.

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will help teachers eliminate useless operations, prove the value of a worth-while operation, and pace the flow of work through the office. Such analyses in the hands of business teachers provide much-needed information on what to teach, how much to teach, what related information a well-trained pupil must have, and what skills and special abilities he must possess.

Businessmen should report to the schools regarding the effectiveness of the curriculum. They may report to the school the progress made by the pupil on his first job. The first thirty days on a job will usually indicate whether the training has been satisfactory. This information would enable the schools to obtain a first-hand knowledge of what was expected of the beginner and also determine any deficiency in the curriculum.

Summary and conclusions. Many more points for businessmen to cooperate upon could be suggested. If businessmen say they do not have the time, that it is the function of the business teachers to assume the initiative, they are, by this very statement, failing to cooperate. The business teacher is the servant of the community, and one of the most important segments in the community is the businessman.

These comments are not to be construed as implying that business teachers are perfect and that businessmen

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are totally at fault. In fact, it would be wiser for both groups to stop talking about faults of others and recognize that there is a common problem. Let it be understood, however, that cooperation means both working together for a common purpose—not one person condemning the other and telling him what is wrong.

Business education, a cooperative enterprise, must be recognized by the schools and business as a joint responsibility. The effectiveness of any program of business training is directly dependent upon the extent to which the teacher and businessman cooperate in determining the needs for business training and then plan the program to meet those needs.

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CHAPTER V

SURVEY RESUL'S

During the month of August 1948, a survey was made within the City of Lakeland, Florida, in an effort to determine whether or not the high school commercial program was meeting the needs of the community. The interview method was employed in making this survey, and the investigator conducted all interviews personally. Since it was desirable to get the viewpoint of administrators, business education teachers, and businessmen, representatives of all three groups were contacted.

Introduction. Fifty interviews were made. These included the three local high school administrators, the seven high school business education teachers, and forty local businessmen. (See appendix for list of persons interviewed.) The businessmen represented thirty-two different types of business firms, and the majority are members of the Lakeland Chamber of Commerce or the Lakeland Junior Chamber of Commerce. All businessmen

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 interviewed have or have had in their employ graduates of the high school business education department.

In making these interviews, the investigator was, without exception, courteously received by all individuals contacted. At no time during the month was he refused an audience with a businessman who was in his office, even though the businessman was frequently "snowed under" with important work to do. Except in a few rare instances, the businessmen devoted their full time and attention to the questions being asked and made no effort to hurry the interview along.

nad an opportunity to discuss business education directly with the high school teacher, and they were eager to expound their personal theories on that subject and to relate personal experiences along that line. In fact, in many instances the interviewer found himself becoming the interviewed as the businessmen bombarded him with queries as to the current trends in business education and how the local high school business education department was adjusting the curriculum to follow those trends.

Before the interview ever was started, an interview sheet was constructed. This sheet was followed to a great extent. (See appendix for copy.) Questions were not confined to those on the sheet, however, and those who

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 were interviewed were encouraged to talk freely on matters of particular interest to them. The length of time consumed by the interview varied in length from 15 to 40 minutes. Time seemed to be a matter of little object with the men interviewed, possibly because the month of August represents in Central Florida the time of year when business operates on a rock-bottom basis. For those contemplating similar investigations, August 13 hereby recommended as the ideal month of the year in which to find businessmen in conversational moods.

Eusiness education curriculum. Even though the
Lakeland High School has offered business education in some
form or another for several years, the first question put
to test in the interviews involved whether or not the
person interviewed thought that business education should
be offered. The ans er was unaminously affirmative among
all three groups. When questioned as to just what type of
business education should be emphasized, however, there was
a broad difference of opinion. The administrators were
earnest in their contention that it is not the objective
of the high school to give the student specialized vocational training. Instead they were of the opinion that
if given general business education he could learn what
his abilities and capabilities are in that field of work

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and could turn his pursuits in that direction after graduation. Sharing this point of view were 52 per cent of the businessmen. Only 18 per cent of the businessmen advocated emphasis on vocational business education, while the reaction of the remaining 30 per cent was that both vocational and general should be offered and the student allowed to choose his preference. Also in favor of offering both types of training were the majority of the teachers interviewed.

The businessmen who favored general business education were of the opinion that the "youngsters" were too
young to make a decision as to what they wanted to do
after graduation, and vocational education would simply
be a waste of time if the individual were to change his
mind and enter another field. On the other hand, if he
were given general business education, he would be sure to
profit by it for two reasons: (1) If he does choose a
career in business, he background will be very helpful
to him. (2) If he does not choose business, the general
business education necessary for life will be his. The
simple conclusion drawn from this school of thought is
this: General business education will fit more people.

The vocational training advocates said that the more specialized training we can give the student while in school, the better his chances for securing a good

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position after graduation. They also mentioned that the majority of our graduates do not go to college but ry to find jobs immediately after graduation. Unless there is some job they can do and do well, what advantage do they have over the individual who did not graduate from high school at all?

And what of those people who favored offering both the general and vocational business education programs? Outstanding in this group were the teachers. Of course under present conditions, the teachers realize that this dual program would be not only impractical but impossible as well. Teacher loads are already too heavy and our facilities would be grossly inadequate. But teachers are an optimistic lot, and they dream of the day when our vocational guidance program will enable a student to decide early in school "what he wants to be"; the day when teacher loads will be reduced to the point where the teacher can work individually with each of his students to help him reach his objectives; and the day when an adequate physical layout of equipment and supplies will be provided to meet the teacher's need. If such an extensive program cannot be carried out in high school in the present four years' tie, then it will be necessary to add a fifth or even a sixth year.

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Course of study. Administrators, teachers, and businessmen were questioned on the advisability of teaching the following courses in grades of the high school level: typewriting, selling and advertising, secretarial, bookkeeping, and office machines. All those interviewed were of the opinion that typewriting and bookkeeping should be offered. Several people qualified their answers, however, by adding that they thought one year of each was sufficient. These subjects were cited for their general educational value and recognized as not only essential to the raduate entering the business world, but equally helpful to the student in college or the girl who simply becomes a housewife.

While the greater percentage of businessmen and teachers interviewed agreed that selling, secretarial training, and office machines should be a part of the high school course of study, the administrators pointed out that those courses for the most part should be offered only as the demand becomes sufficient on the

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part of the students. At the present time, however, both selling and secretarial training are offered. Although they thought that learning to operate popular makes of office machines would be worth-while training for high school students, several businessmen commented that the cost of such a program would probably rouse the ire of the taxpayers. Since no equipment for such a course is available at this time, its inauguration within the near future seems doubtful.

Other courses other than those mentioned in the interview which were suggested as additions to the course of study were: business English, spelling, office courtesy, general business mathematics, human relations, and a transcription period to augment the teaching of shorthand.

Curriculum deficiencies and suggestions for improvement. All persons interviewed were asked their opinion as to where the high school was falling short in these four phases of education: general knowledge, specific training, adaptability, and dependability.

Opinion in all three groups interviewed was almost perfectly divided among the four choices. This then is an indication that there should be plenty of room for improvement all down the line. Many of the businessmen expressed the opinion that the high school was doing a

thorough job throughout, but educators should continue to expend their energies in a concerted effort to make this attitude a universal one.

Special weaknesses of high school graduates as pointed out by all three groups include the following:

- 1. Weak in spelling.
- 2. Improper attitude toward work.
- 3. Need training in courtesy.
- 4. Uninformed on modern business methods.
- 5. Unable to coordinate subject matter.
- 6. Inability to work with others.
- 7. Need more practice in typewriting.
- 8. Need to meet higher standards in all subjects.
- 9. Inability to take things seriously.
- 10. Need greater familiarity with English language.
- 11. Unable to concentrate.
- 12. Lack of determination.
- 13. Need more vocational guidance.
- 14. Unwillingness to start at bottom.
- 15. Need more practical experience.

In making the survey, it was interesting to note that practically all persons were able to point out the weaknesses in the curriculum, but relatively few could formulate suggestions for improving the curriculum.

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However the following improvements were suggested for consideration:

- 1. Emphasize importance of thoroughness.
- 2. Continually strive to get better-qualified teachers.
- 3. Stress honest dealing.
- 4. Expansion of the D. C. T. program.
- 5. Annual meeting of cross-section of administrators, teachers, and businessmen.
- 6. Encourage girls to take bo h typing and book-keeping to train for work in small businesses.
- 7. Teachers keep up with current methods.
- 8. Require typing and bookkeeping for all high school students.
- 9. More trips to stores and offices for students.
- 10. Set higher standards for passing and graduation.
- 11. Testing program to determine aptitudes.
- 12. Greater use of training films.
- 13. Invite successful businessmen to talk to classes.
- 14. Do better job of selling education to students.
- 15. Pay teachers higher salaries.
- 16. Formation of advisory commit ee composed of administrators, teachers, and businessmen.
- 17. Lengthen the school day.

These weaknesses and suggestions for improvement involve not only intellectual training but character training as well. This would indicate, therefore, that the

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businessman is fully aware of the obligation of the school in developing the good citizen of tomorrow.

School-businessmen relationships. One hundred per cent of the administrators and teachers interviewed and 88 per cent of the businessmen were of the opinion that the businessman does have a responsibility in the development of a worth-while business education program in the high school. Several businessmen pointed out, however, that the responsibility was a cooperative one rather than one of taking the lead in establishing school policies and constructing a curriculum.

The majority of all three groups thought curriculum deficiencies could best be remedied by administrators, teachers, and businessmen working together toward that end. It should be pointed out that, on the other hand, some 33 per cent of the businessmen thought that the curriculum should be left entirely in the hands of administrators and teachers. One man exclaimed, "Why include the businessman? He has enough to worry about already!" Even so, there was evidence on every hand that the businessman would be ready, willing, and able to assist the administrators and teachers in curriculum development at any time he was invited to do so.

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When asked to suggest procedures for improving high school-businessman relationships, the following replies were prevalent:

- 1. Encourage businessmen to visit the high school to talk with teachers and students.
- 2. Initiate an active follow-up program on graduates now employed by businessmen.
- 3. Annual employer-teacher meetings.
- 4. Expansion of the D. C. T. program to include more businessmen and more students.
- 5. Cooperation with local civic clubs on various community projects.
- 6. Field trips for students to local business offices and stores.
- 7. Foster an interest among businessmen in P. T. A.
- 8. Establishment of high school placement service.
- 9. Formation of an advisory committee composed of administrators, teachers, and businessmen.
- 10. Eliminate politics from school system, thereby creating more incentive for cooperation among the businessmen.

to be sound and practical. With a little community cooperation the majority could easily be carried out to the
mutual advantage of all parties concerned. Some of the
plans are already in existence and have been used to some
extent, but the remainder could be broadened to make business education in the Lakeland High School a community
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High school placement service. The businessmen were asked whether they preferred to hire the superior, above average, average, or below average student, as measured by academic standards. Some 12 per cent expressed a preference for the superior student on the grounds that he could learn quicker, would require a shorter period of training, and would be more efficient. These men felt that there was an important relationship between the individual's intelligence and his ability to learn new things.

because they thought he was more flexible and adapted himself more easily to the job. This group thought that the superior student was apt to neglect development of important personality traits which are more often existent in the above-average student. Another point mentioned frequently was that the superior student frequently would not stay on the job at the salary the businessman could afford to pay.

A majority of the men interviewed, 58 per cent, declared a preference for the average student with plain, ordinary "horse sense." These men felt that the average student is more practical and that frequently the student who excels in theory is a complete failure in the business

world. Their contention was that the person with average intelligence with a willingness to learn is much more adaptable to the job than the individual who starts work with a belief that he knows as much, if not more, than his employer already. Other qualities attributed to the average student were that he is more ambitious, more energetic, more appreciative, more obedient, and more socially and athletically inclined than those falling in the other categories.

only 20 per cent of the businessmen interviewed had ever used the high school as a source of direct contact in securing new employees. The remaining 80 per cent had contacted the high school students directly regarding employment, either by means of applications or recommendations from outside parties. The majority expressed dissatisfaction with these methods and reported a high labor turnover, and 90 per cent agreed that they would be willing to patronize a high school placement bureau if such an activity were in existence.

Lakeland High School has never sponsored a placement service in the past, but steps toward establishment of this service will be underway on a small scale this school year. The teachers believe that job placement will be advantageous to students, businessmen, and the community as a whole.

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Summary and conclusions. Changing trends in business demand that business education be geared to these changes in preparing students for life in the community. Carefully conducted surveys may serve as a basis upon which to make recommendations for curriculum changes in high school programs, thereby approaching an educational program that meets the needs of the community.

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CHAPTER VI

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Every individual has two main objectives -- to secure a livin and to live a life. The function of education, in its broad aspect, is to promote these two objectives.

Emphasis on curriculum-making varies with the age and circumstances of the person. In planning a curriculum, the mission of business education should be to promote both the objectives. One should no be developed to the exclusion of the other. Good citizenship is the embodiment of both.

Bates says that the sudent should develop (1) his skills to earn a living, and (2) a life characterized by an intelligent interest in what is going on in the world at large so that he can assume responsibility for the improvement of the world.

In the past, not enough stress was placed on the specific, present-day needs of those who are being trained.

^{1.} Gertrude A. Bates, "Improvement of Business Instruction through a Survey," Balance Sheet, (December 1946), pp. 146-147.

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These needs may be met through a training program that is broad enough to include the objectives. A well-balanced business education program should meet the needs of the student personally and provide specialized vocational training.

that a plea should be made both to school people and businessmen to strive to breach the chasm between them.

Interestingly enough, that chasm is born of an inferiority complex on both sides. Many businessmen feel this inferiority because of the superior education and cultural background of the school people. Many school people feel this inferiority because of the financial success of the businessman. If that chasm were to be breached, and a better understanding reached between businessmen and school people, both sides would soon lose their inferiority complexes. Each side would be more willing to help the other. Both would gain, as people always do, f om better understanding.

Businessmen, generally speaking, are rather shy on the subject and need to be wooed by school people; but the businessmen will readily respond. The school people

^{1.} H. W. Schacter, "Businessman Looks at the Schools," Kentucky School Journal, (February 1947), pp. 20-21.

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will have to make the first advances. They are urged to do so; they will find it eminently rewarding.

The building of a better education is an all-community job. Much of the building will be done in the school. Much of the leadership will come from the school, but the school will be acting as an integral part of the larger whole--the educating community. The school will be more concerned with the outcomes of total education than with its own likes and prerogatives. It will expect and demand that the community assume its rightful place and perform its inescapable responsibility. The school within the community will employ effective techniques in building a curriculum, planning teaching procedures, and utilizing materials which will meet the challenge of the region. Nebulous talk about cooperative action will be succeeded by concrete ways and means of making cooperation actually work. Much is now known about those ways, and the techniques and skills which are needed can be developed. There is a growing body of evidence that the democratic way is the efficient way.

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RFLATION OF COMMUNITY BUSINESS NEEDS TO HIGH SCHOOL COMMERCIAL PROGRAM

REX TOOTHMAN

Submitted in partial fulfillment

of the requirements for the degree

of Master of Arts

in the Graduate School of

Florida Southern College

STATE AND POST OFFICE ADDRESS.

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LIST OF PERSONS SURVEYED

Administrators

Name 1. Mr. Carl S. Cox

2. Mr. John Lovelace

3. Mr. T. J. Poppell

Position

Supervising Principal Assistant Principal High School Principal

Business Education Teachers

Name

Mrs. Clarabel Phillips

2. Mrs. Etta Drennan

3. Mr. C. w. Echols

4. Mr. Kenneth Hartsaw

5. Mrs. Esther Holder

6. Miss Lois Johnston7. Mrs. Eula Lastinger

Subjects Taught

Typing and Shorthand

Business English

Junior Business Training

Business Arithmetic

Junior Business Training

Typing

Bookkeeping and Office

Practice

Businessmen

Name

Type of Business

1.	Mr.	R.	P.	Ammerman

Mr. J. H. Carter Mr. D. W. Castle 2.

3.

4. Mr. W. F. Cook

5. Mr. J. W. Cordell 6. Mr. L. R. Crews

7. Mr. Darrell Damon

8. Mr. C. G. Detwiler

9. Mr. Vernon Edgar

10. Mr. Melvin Estroff

11. Mr. George L. Gaines

12. Mrs. Louise Graves

13. Mr. Paul Hale

14. Mr. W. M. Hollis

15. Mr. Gordon Justus

16. Mr. Norman Kent

17. Mr. Donald G. Knox

18. Mr. B. G. Langston

19. Mr. Whitney Lindsey

20. Mr. Kirk McKay

Chain department store

Cafeteria

Independent grocery

Telephone company

Banker

Electrical appliance

Chain department store

Insurance

Auto storage

Women's clothing store

Jewelry store

Women's clothing store

Banker

Chain grocery

Tires and auto parts

Music store

Insurance branch office

Lawyer

Theater

Furniture store

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27. Mr. Frank Myers

28. Mr. W. S. Myrick, Jr.

29. Mr. C. W. Palmore

30. Mr. Roy Peters

51. Mrs. C. F. Redding

32. Mr. D. W. Redmond 33. Mr. W. D. Shilling

34. Mr. J. H. Storm

35. Mr. Lanier Upshaw

36. Miss E. Wallace

37. Mr. Emory E. Walker 38. Mr. J. E. Ward

39. Mr. S. O. Ward

40. Mr. Edward Wilson

Lawyer

Unemployment office Men's clothing store

Insurance

Men's clothing store

Lumber company

Office equipment

Men's clothing store

Packing house

Bakery

Theater

Garage

Newspaper

Drug store

Insurance

5 and 10 cent store

Civil service board

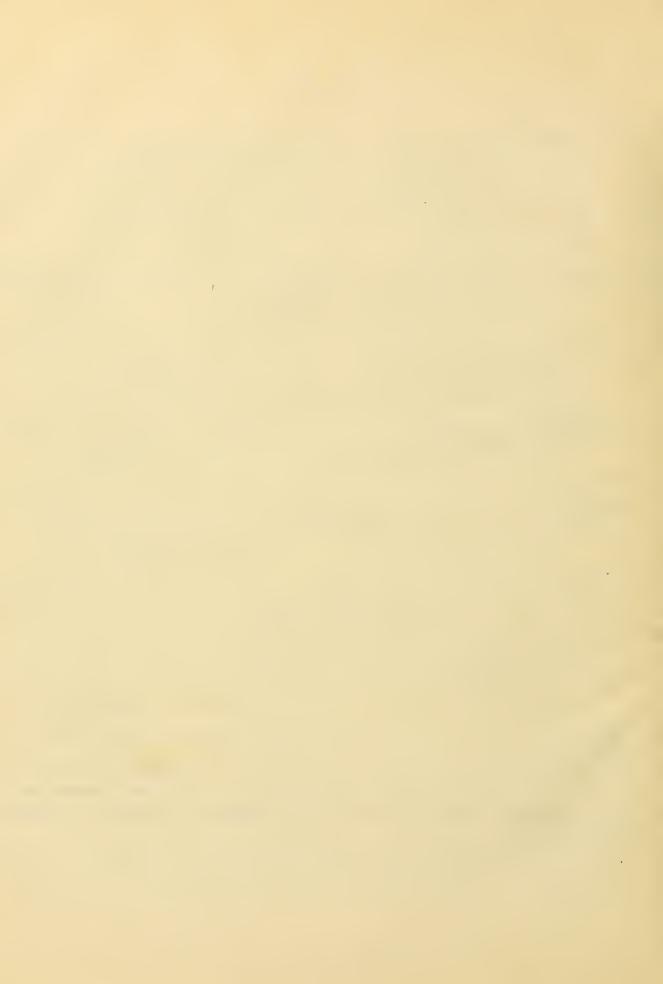
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2.	In the high school business education	on program, do you think emphasis ness education?
3.	In which of the following fields do	you think the high school should
1.		which type of student do you prefer? The average The below average
5.		at ways are the commercial department in business preparation? Adaptability Dependability
6.	Do you think the businessman has a confine high school commercial programmer. Yes Who do you think is to blame for decommercial curriculum as it now standard the commercial programmer.	am? No ficiencies in the high school
7.	What suggestions can you offer for education program?	improving high school business
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10.	would you be willing to consider hi if the hi h school had a placement Yes	gh school graduates and students bureau? No



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